



Dr. Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary

Summer is full swing and we are looking forward to the end of the legislative session and the chance to spend time in the back yard, relaxing with a cold drink in the heat and humidity.

Let's pray for a quiet hurricane season, and an end to the crisis in the Gulf of Mexico. OJJ is fortunate that we are not activated to work on oil spill relief like so many other state agencies. The least we can do to help our fellow employees is to send good thoughts and prayers for positive resolution. Everyone in Louisiana is affected in some way by the oil "spill." It is comforting that support is coming from people all over the nation over the devastation to our coastline environment, our way of life and in the end, our economy.

On a brighter note, it's clear that OJJ employees are as active as ever, coming up with creative ideas to meet the mission. It's so interesting to read "The Scoop" and find out what's been going on. You obviously took to heart my message to keep the good news coming – the editor reports that this issue of *The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is the biggest ever, packed with news about what's going in the OJJ world. Keep it coming and have a great month.

"Doc"
Dr. Mary L. Livers

THE DAILY MOTIVATOR

The power of your own possibilities

What if you could fully comprehend everything of which you're capable?

You would never waste another moment of your precious time.

What if you could know how truly powerful you are?

You would never again be reluctant to move forward.

You are the living expression of opportunity.

Within you are countless magnificent achievements to be discovered and fulfilled.

Fear keeps those achievements unrealized, hidden from yourself and the world. Love will set them free.

Spend a moment in loving thankfulness for all that has brought you to where you are today.

Peacefully let go of the resentment, doubt, disappointment, worry and fear.

Feel the power of your own possibilities.

See that the best is yet to come, and joyfully begin to bring it to life.

- Ralph Marston

Staff Spotlight

Spotlight on... Emily Williams, Group Leader, Bridge City Center for Youth

Observing Emily Williams, Group Leader in Harmony Dormitory, interact with "the youth" is to watch the consummate professional. Always calm and steady, she never appears flustered, even under the pressure of tough questions from visitors from all over the world. And beneath that calm exterior is a heart for children. Emily loves the youth she works with.

Ask what she likes best about her job and she talks about her boys. Ask her to describe her background and she talks about the youth. One would think she has been with OJJ for decades. Emily has been a member of the OJJ family for four years.

"Emily Williams is a very hard working and dedicated team player who comes every day to make a difference in the lives of the boys in her care," said Director Linda London. "Her housing unit is always tour-ready, as she decorates it to meet the needs of the youth. Ms. Williams has been selected by the executive team to mentor new Group Leaders due to her efforts and mastery of the La Mod concept."

"I enjoy my job – the hardest part is keep to the creativity going and making it all happen for the kids," she said. "The kids push me to the next level. Each time our group gets a new member or we receive a whole new group of kids, they set the bar so high. They amaze me and I am so proud of them."

Each housing unit at Bridge City partners with a community organization so the youth can do community service and restorative justice projects. Emily's dorm, Harmony, partners with the Southeast Louisiana War Veterans Home in Reserve, in St. John the Baptist Parish. They have been visiting the War Vets each month for the past two years.

"There are two married couples at the war veterans' home who want to renew their

vows, and they have asked the youth to serve at their reception because they have gotten to know one another," Emily said. "The boys feel so honored."

Emily described the Memorial Day program that her group attended at the War Veterans Home. Two of her youth were on the program and the rest were in the audience. They all helped serve the veterans refreshments. "Our youth gave the veterans certificates of recognition for their service. It was such an educational event, a real ceremony. We witnessed the presentation of colors, the flag folding, the march and the helmet ceremony. Our boys were actively listening to the program and felt they were a part of it."

Emily relates that an elected official who attended the ceremony knows someone who works at Jetson, and told Emily that she would tell the Jetson staff member how wonderful the Bridge City boys were at the Memorial Day ceremony. Emily said, "You never know who is watching you."

Speaking of never knowing who is watching, another official who attended the Veterans Home program was from the St. John Parish Sheriff's Office. He asked Emily if our youth would be interested in volunteering at the parish facility. Before accepting the invitation, Emily plans to visit to see if the partnership would be a good fit. If it works out, she will carefully choose the youth to volunteer there. "Some of our kids have a background....this would show them that kids don't always have to run from the police."

"I tell the kids that once they leave here, they need to use the skills they have learned when they are back in the community – interacting," Emily said. "They learn so much, and come so far while they are here."

Emily began her state service in the mid-1980s at DHH's Metropolitan Developmental Center. Hurricane Katrina destroyed the site, which was never reopened.

Emily joined OJJ February 2006 as a Youth Care Worker 3 in Ujama dorm. Two months later she was promoted to Group Leader. In December 2007, Emily transferred to Jetson as Group Leader in Sunshine dorm, but with the then-planned closure of the facility, she returned to Bridge City in June 2008, as Group Leader in Zulu dorm, now Harmony.

Before coming to OJJ, Emily had never worked in a correctional setting, but wanted to give it a try, especially given the considerable amount of training for in La MOD. She really enjoys the atmosphere of support at both Bridge City and Jetson.

Emily's personal passions are travel, reading and attending festivals. Louisiana's rich culture provides lots of opportunities for festival-going – she particularly enjoys the French Quarter Festival, the Tomato Festival and the Ponchatoula Strawberry Festival. She enjoys trying different foods and seeing how people in other areas prepare dishes.

A favorite pastime is sightseeing in the French Quarter (typical Saturday entertainment for New Orleans natives) – wandering through the French Market and along the streets, listening to music and watching the people.

Bridge City has hosted a number of tours for visitors in recent months, and Harmony dorm is usually one of the stops. Visitors are impressed with the cheerful décor of the dorm and the way the youth are forthcoming in describing their processes and experiences. While Emily will explain the way the housing unit operates, she spotlights the youth. "I don't like to be the center of attention," she says, "I do this for the benefit of the agency."

Clearly, Emily Williams deserves her own moment in the spotlight, as someone who not only meets the mission every day, she lives it.

Employees of the Quarter

Please join us in congratulating the Employees of the Quarter, first quarter 2010.

Region One

Supervisor of the Quarter PPS Kim Scott, Shreveport Officer of the Quarter PPO Gary Hunter, Monroe

Support of the Quarter Patricia Dense, Administrative Coordinator 4, Tallulah

Region Two

Supervisor of the Quarter Regional Manager Randall Hill, Natchitoches

Officer of the Quarter PPO Brenda Sarpy, Natchitoches

Support of the Quarter Sharon Graham, Administrative Coordinator 4, Alexandria

Region Three

Supervisor of the Quarter PPS Susan Miller, Baton Rouge

Officer of the Quarter PPO James Percle, Thibodaux Support of the Quarter Gail Miller, Administrative Coordinator 3, Baton Rouge

Region Four

Supervisor of the Quarter PPS Justine Aguiar, New Orleans/Jefferson

Officer of the Quarter PPO Dana May, Hammond

Support of the Quarter Earnessa Moncriffe, Administrative Supervisor 2, New Orleans/ Jefferson

Transitions

Comings and Goings.....Welcome to new members of the OJJ Family:

Bridge City Center for Youth

Jermaine Bennett, Corrections Cadet Belisha Dennis, Corrections Sergeant Danielle Eugene, Corrections Cadet James Eleridge, Substitute Teacher Lavanti Mayfield, Corrections Sergeant Kima Richard, Corrections Sergeant Brenda Williams, Substitute Teacher

Swanson Center for Youth

George Alexander, Juv. Justice Specialist 3
Deborah Carr, Juv. Food Prod. Worker
Angela Garr, Juvenile Justice Specialist 1
Garcia Gerson, Juvenile Justice Specialist 1
Tonja Jones, Juvenile Justice Specialist 1
Justin Martin, Corrections Cadet
Shalya Miles, Corrections Cadet
Regina Onyemechara, Corrections Cadet
Drouzon Quillen, Corrections Cadet
Clifford Smith, Corrections Cadet
Joshua Turnbow, Corrections Cadet

Alexandria

Franklin Parrino, Probation & Parole Off. 1

Lafayette

Blair Johnson, Probation & Parole Officer 1

New Orleans

Brian Schum, Probation & Parole Officer 1

Promotions

Shreveport

Sandra Ersoff - Probation & Parole Off. 3

Swanson Center for Youth

Rodney Stewart, Corrections Major Glenda Ward, Social Worker 5-B

Retirement

Bridge City Center for YouthMichael Gaines, Deputy Director

OJJ Staff: Best in the Business

Col. Louis Hyatt, Director of Investigative Services, was featured in the Best in the Business/June issue of ACA's publication, *Corrections Today.* Col. Hyatt is cited for bringing his many years of law enforcement experience to OJJ, and treating youth with respect while expecting to receive respect in return. Dr. Livers is quoted in the story as saying, "Investigative Services treats youth with dignity, giving them a source to air their grievances and concerns."

Other OJJ staff who were submitted to *Corrections Today* for the Best in the Business issue were **Orlando Davis, Monroe OJJ Probation and Parole Supervisor** and Cassandra Washington, Administrative Program Director at Bridge City.

CQIS POLICY UPDATES

A.1.6 Legislative Updates and Statutory Reporting Requirements 5/24/10

A.2.43 Employee Subpoenas, Notices of Hearing, Discovery, and Legal Correspondence 5/21/10

A.2.52 Dual Career Ladder Policy for the Professional Information Technology Group 4/20/10

A.2.60 Domestic Violence 5/4/10 B.6.2 Communicable and Contagious Diseases and Infection Control Program 5/7/10

A.2.33 Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights 5/28/10

C.1.13 Legislative Request/Communication, Media Access and Public Information 5/28/10

Success!

As often as we receive stories about our youth overcoming adversity and the situations they find themselves in, we will print them in *The Inside Scoop...of OJJ*. Please keep the good news coming!

Thibodaux O.J.J.

Youth Caleb V. achieved the TOPS - TECH award at Ellender Memorial High School for maintaining a minimum 2.5 GPA, scoring a minimum of 17 on the ACT and completing the TOPS core curriculum. Caleb graduated from Ellender Memorial High School in May.

Caleb entered OJJ custody in August 2007 with a non-secure placement where he resided with LA Mentor. He earned an early release from custody to probation in June 2009. Caleb was granted an early release by his judge in May. Thanks to his PPO and caseworker for assisting in Caleb's success. He was under the supervision of **PPO James Percle of** Thibodaux OJJ and **PPO Stephanie Michetti** from Hammond, his caseworker when he was at the LA Mentor Home.

We are so proud to provide this information for the entire OJJ family to read. It is always a joyous event to see a youth accomplish something positive.

Natchitoches OJJ

AC3 Rosa Brownlee was instrumental in her nephew, Christopher, recently receiving his GED. Christopher had a history with OJJ in his teen years and had not obtained his high school diploma. A couple months ago, Christopher turned to his aunt when he no longer had a home to go to. Rosa told Chris he could move into their home, have a bedroom of his own, food to eat and a roof over his head -- only under certain conditions. Christopher would have to obtain a job, earn his own spending money and receive his GED. After only two short months in the

Brownlees' home, Christopher obtained a part-time job, received his GED, and joined the Flatwoods Volunteer Fire Department as a fire fighter and first responder, along with Rosa and all three of her sons. He is currently waiting to hear if he has been accepted into from the National Guard.



Pictured from left are Rosa's son Tyler Brownlee and nephew Christopher Brownlee.

Lake Charles OJJ

Youth J.C. under the supervision of PPO Monet Newman and PPO Rebecca Harmon, graduated from the Youth Challenge Program with his GED. He then went on to the Job Challenge Program and successfully completed the program with a certification in Culinary Arts. We congratulate him on his hard work and accomplishments!

Mahalia Jackson Center Opens in New Orleans

2405 Jackson Avenue

By Program Specialist Paulette Carter New Orleans/Jefferson OJJ

The Mahalia Jackson Early Childhood and Family Learning Center had its Grand Opening Ceremony May 15. The Center is committed to providing services from a holistic perspective. The primary focus is to render services to children from ages 0 to 5 to enable them to enter the school setting on "equal footing," healthy and literate.

The center sits on four acres. It will encompass a school, social services agencies, a library, a resource center, a medical clinic, and a number of other services.

As I sat observing the beautifully painted faces of the children and listened to the appreciative comments and wishful outcomes that were being uttered by attendees, I realized *hopes and dreams* were, once again, flourishing through a community plagued with challenges. This is the beginning of a unified effort to conquer the challenges within this community. OJJ is a unified partner in this endeavor.

Before joining OJJ, Human Resources Director Gwen Jones served as DSS Head Start Collaboration Director and was a cofounder of the newly opened Mahalia Jackson Early Childhood and Family Learning Center. She represented OJJ at the grand opening ceremony. Gwen said the location was chosen to help rebuild New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. "We were trying to restore an abandoned neighborhood to normalcy and create a place where people would feel pride of ownership," Gwen said.

The Center is named after New Orleans native Mahalia Jackson, a world-renowned gospel singer who grew up not far from the center that today bears her name. It is a part of the state's Neighborhood Place program, in which several family- and child-serving state agencies collaborate with local programs to bring a one-stop shop for services into neighborhoods. The Center opened in May after several years of meetings and discussions between state and federal agencies and children's advocacy groups.

On-site partners and service providers include the Orleans Parish School Board; Early Childhood and Family Learning Foundation; Total Community Action/Early Head Start; Central City Renaissance Alliance; LA Department of Education; LA Department of Social Services; LA Workforce Commission; LA Office of Juvenile Justice, Boys Town Louisiana; New Orleans Public Library; LEH/Prime Time Family Reading Time; St. Thomas Community Health Clinic; Center for African American Studies and Hetep Destress Center.

OJJ's services are at the Center are provided by Boys Town Louisiana, in collaboration with the New Orleans Regional Office. Boys Town will provide information about OJJ and a representative to serve as a contact if assistance is needed.

Thibodaux Regional Office

Congratulations

PPO Tracy Theriot was selected **Employee of the Month** for April. Tracy has been a member of the OJJ family since May 1995. He works in a diligent, proficient and efficient manner with our youth as well as our partners in the community.

PPO James Percle was selected **Officer of the Quarter-**Region Three/First Quarter Award. James has been a member of the OJJ family since July 2002. He is a well respected officer in the community and among his co-workers.

Thanks

A huge kudos goes out to Honorable Emile R. St. Pierre of the 29th Judicial District Court in St. Charles Parish, who graciously sent his St. Charles Parish/Thibodaux Region Probation Officers Summer Ferriera, Rachel Loupe, JaNice Williams and Herman Matherne to the recent FINS Conference in Baton Rouge.

PPO Keith Kotoski attended the Anti-Gang Training Conference as part of the Juvenile Justice Project Safe Neighborhood in New Orleans.

Tallulah Regional Office

Congratulations

AC4 Patricia Dense was selected the Support Employee of the Quarter.

AC4 Patricia Dense's daughter Ashley graduated from ULM in May, receiving a BA in Sociology.

PPO III Terri Berry's 17-year old **daughter Taylor was** recently crowned Miss West Carroll.

On May 13, most of the Tallulah OJJ staff went to the Monroe OJJ office for an informative "town hall" meeting with Dr. Livers.

Swanson Center for Youth

Employee Appreciation Meal Provided

In recognition of Correctional Employees Week, Swanson staff were treated to a meal. **Director Carolyn Atkins** collected donations to purchase the food. Staff working the 11:30 p.m. - 7:30 a.m. shift were served coffee, juice, doughnuts and pastries. For the other shifts, **Major Vernon Foy** fired up the grill for hamburgers which went along with chicken wings, baked beans, sausage and corn served by **SW7 Kathy Powell**.

Teachers and Students Create "Shakespeare Garden"

The teachers in the Yellow Brick Annex, Teicha Woods, Dr. Rebecca Florsheim, Michael Fontana and Larry Prater, and their students, along with Lydia May, Horticulture Instructor and her class, all pitched in to construct what they call a "Shakespeare Garden." Staff and students worked together to build the fountain, complete with miniature fish, and place the flowers and shrubs.



Swanson's new Shakespeare Garden

The idea was initiated by Mrs. Woods and Dr. Florsheim, who wanted to facilitate cross-curricular activities through the project, including English, Science, and Horticulture. Brett Clark, Welding Instructor and Chuck Copeland, Carpentry Instructor, and their students helped by building the tables and chairs for the garden, which will also be used as an outdoor study area.

Almost all of the materials, including plants and soil, were donated by businesses in the Monroe area. In the future, the teachers would like to paint a mural on the side of the building to showcase the talents of our youth.

Essay Contest Held for Crime Victims' Awareness

In recognition of Crime Victims Awareness Week, Monroe OJJ organized an essay contest for the youth entitled, "What If I Were a Victim of My Own Crime?" **Youth L'Darrius B.** from Evergreen Dormitory at Bridge City was the first place winner and was awarded a cash prize of \$15.00.

His counselor, **Valerie Nordstrom**, said, "Youth L'Darrius B. is classified as MR and the only editing I did when typing his essay was for spelling. He's so proud."

Following is L'Darrius' winning essay.

What If I Was a Victim of My Own Crime?

By L'Darrius B.

My name is L'Darrius B. At age 15, I made some bad decisions in my life. I chose to turn to a life of crime, by breaking into people's cars and taking their possessions. I knew this was wrong, but at the same time, I felt that my behavior was okay because it gave me acceptance with my peers and made me feel that I was in control.

If I was a victim of my own crimes, I would be angry at the perpetrator. I might even be vengeful and want to kill the person who invaded my privacy and made my family members fearful for our safety.

I would call the police to file a report after the crime was committed, and I would attend the perpetrator's court hearings. I would ask for restitution if my possessions were not returned to me.

Being a victim of my own crimes would make me feel that I need to be more careful about my safety. I would lock my car and doors. I would work on forgiving the person who committed this crime, though. As long as I got my property back, I would not focus on the perpetrator being punished.

FAST Track Youth Make Mother's Day Cards

FAST Track youth and staff have been very busy. Our moms are very important to all of us. They are here when we need to be "picked up" and most of all they pray for us.

For Mother's Day, FAST Track staff Program Manager Jan James, Group Leader Ella Ivory, SSC3 and Jatansha Jackson, SSC3, took a picture of each youth to put into cards the youth made or their mothers. The cards were then mailed out to the mothers. The staff worked hard to make sure this special surprise for mothers happened.

National Day of Prayer Observed

In recognition of the National Day of Prayer, staff, youth and guests from The Pentecostals of the Twin Cities Church gathered outside the security building on May 6. Opening remarks were made by our chaplain, **Rev. Ricky James**, followed by the national anthem sung by **Youths Joshua S.** and **Jenerio Y.** Guests from the church spoke and led everyone in prayer.



National Day of Prayer service.

Shreveport Regional Office

Congratulations

PPS Kim Carlisle was named **Supervisor of the Quarter. PPS Carlisle** is a huge asset to OJJ and the Shreveport Office.

PPO Charles Herrmann has been named Shreveport OJJ **Employee of the Month.** Congratulations **PPO Herrmann** and keep up the excellent work.



Shreveport OJJ is proud to announce that Administrative Coordinator 3 Atejia Glover recently received her Bachelor's degree in General Studies from LSUS. Atejia (A.J) will continue

her education by applying to graduate school in the fall.

RM Kristi Martin also has another graduate to be very proud of. Her son, **Colbey Martin**, graduated from Natchitoches Central High School in May. Colbey plans to attend LSUS in the fall and continue his baseball career as a 2nd baseman for the LSUS Pilots.

PPO Sandy Ersoff and **PPO Daniel Barnard** have been recently reallocated to PPO3. We would like to congratulate these officers on this promotion and acknowledge their hard work and dedication. **Congratulations!**

Farewell

Shreveport OJJ will miss **PPO Richard Dukes** whose last day was May 14. **PPO Dukes** is moving to Plano, Texas to support his wife in her new career. We want to wish **PPO Dukes** the best of luck!

Thanks and Appreciation

PPS Rick Ladner has been a faithful representative of **Shreveport OJJ** by participating in monthly JDAI meetings held at Caddo Parish Juvenile Court.

Shreveport OJJ staff traveled to Monroe during May to conduct monthly face-to-face visits with youth from our region who are placed at SCY. Our staff feels that these meetings are very productive and beneficial both to the juvenile and probation officer assigned to the case.

After-hour curfew checks were conducted in May by staff under the supervision of PPS Guy May and PPS Steve Martino. Officers who participated were PPO Todd Carlisle, PPO Brandy Stratton, PPO Terri Harber, PPO Charles Herrmann and PPO Nitasha Gibson.

Program Specialist Jan Crain, PPO Terri Harber and PPO Sandy Ersoff attended the Bossier Sheriff's Office Young Marine Program graduation in May. Shreveport OJJ had several youths who graduated from the program.

We are very proud of **Youth P.M.** who received the Floyd L. Baxter Leadership Award as well as recognition as Honor Graduate. P.M. also was one of three recruits promoted to the rank of Private First Class.



The graduating class of the Bossier Sheriff's Office Young Marines.

Shreveport OJJ was well represented in the Louisiana Blood Drive held in the state building in May. Some were turned down for having iron deficiencies and those who weren't gave with a smile.



PS Jan Crain giving blood.

New Orleans/Jefferson Regional Office

Welcome

Region 1 welcomes **Brian Schum** to the OJJ family as our newest Probation and Parole Officer. Brian previously worked at Springs of Recovery where he engaged with youth battling substance abuse issues. Man on board!

Farewell

A See You Later luncheon was held in May for **PPO Daniel Johnson,** who transferred to the Hammond Region. We know that his big heart and cunning sense of humor will brighten up many dull days. We left the lights on for you Daniel (Bob)!



Farewell to Bob, uh, Daniel.

Congratulations

We are leaping for joy as our very own PPS Justine Aguiar and Administrative Supervisor Earnessa Moncriffe were chosen for the 2010 First Quarter Awards. Justine was chosen Supervisor of the Quarter and Earnessa was chosen Support of the Quarter. Congratulation Ladies! Thanks to y'all, we're off to a great start!

Wow! On May 7 RM Kelly Clement, RMAngela Koenig and PPS **Paulette** Carter attended the recognition ceremony at Lovola University for **PPS** Justine Aguiar who, as previously reported, was awarded "Outstanding Graduate Scholar Award." May 8 PPS Aguiar was



among the 700+ graduates in the Superdome. Saints quarterback Drew Brees was the commencement speaker. Congratulations Justine!

Congratulations to Some Very Bright Young People - and Their Mamas

Our very own PPS Lydia Johnson-Billew's son, Tyler Billew, will enter Brother Martin High School's historically 1st seventh grade class in the upcoming school session. Tyler was awarded an academic scholarship for prior academic performance as a straight A student at St. Angela Merici School in Metairie, where he received special academic recognition of his as one school's Distinguished Honor Roll students. Tyler is a member of Duke University's TIP Program, which identifies gifted children and provides to nurture development of exceptionally brought youngsters. He is also a member of Beta National Honor Society, and an award winning athlete, playing basketball and flag football. Whoa! Kudos Tyler!

The daughter of our very own **PPO3 Vera Seals, Lacey Seals,** is among 40 students chosen from a group of more than 500 nominees from across the South, Midwest, and Eastern Shore to attend the First Session of the 11th Annual Lott Leadership Institute for High School Students at the University of Mississippi. Lacey's acceptance into the institute yielded a scholarship from the University of Mississippi covering the cost of

tuition, housing and meals. Lacey was the only student selected from the great state of Louisiana. Congratulations Lacey! We know that you are going to represent us well!

PO Schofield on the Speaking Circuit

In May **PPO Stanley Schofield** was the guest speaker for the 8th grade promotional class of George Washington Carver Middle School, as well as guest speaker for the seniors of Bogalusa High School. Way to go Stanley!

They Went Down to the Audubon Zoo

Thanks to the generosity of the Audubon Institute, **Social Worker Roxann Tuircuit** was able to secure a complimentary group visit to the zoo. On May 25 **RM Kelly Clement** and Roxann shifted gears to become chaperones, as they accompanied youth from AMI-Kids to the Audubon Zoo. The youth as well as the adults had a marvelous time.



AMIKids enjoy their visit to the zoo.



See you in animal skins!

Natchitoches Regional Office

Congratulations

Two of our own received First Quarter 2010 Employee Awards.



Congratulations to

RM Randall Hill, chosen Supervisor of the Quarter.



PPO Brenda Sarpy was selected as Officer of the Quarter.

Employee of the Month

PPS Simon Sarpy was nominated **Employee of the Month** by his peers.



PPS Simon Sarpy

RM Randall Hill's daughter Amy D. Hill, earned a Bachelor of Science, cum laude, from Louisiana Tech in Ruston, Louisiana.



Pictured from left, Randall, Amy, Tammy and Abby Hill.

Community Involvement

PPS Simon Sarpy continues to umpire for the Natchitoches Association of Dixie Youth.

PPOs Heather Christophe and Brenda Sarpy attended the Victim Awareness Week event at Ware Youth Center's Group Home.



PPO Heather Christophe, center, at Ware Youth Center's Victim Awareness event.



Posters made by youth for Victim Awareness Week.

Natchitoches OJJ Hosts Quarterly Meeting

Natchitoches OJJ recently hosted the statewide Social Services quarterly meeting of community-based social workers who work in the regional offices.

Attending were Angela Bridgewater, Community Program Manager Based Services; Nancy Gautreau, **Program** Community Based Services: Manager, Daronda Lathan-Brown; Jennifer Anderson; Roxann Tuircuit; Lori Wagner, Reshonn Saul and Nelda Graham.

Pictured below are, seated, Daronda Lathan-Brown, LCSW-BACS and Jennifer Anderson, MSW, GSW; standing, Nelda Graham, MSW, GSW; Angela Bridgewater, LCSW-BACS, **Program** Manager, Community Based Services; Reshonn Saul; Lori Wagner, LPC; Roxann Tuircuit MSW, GSW; and Nancy Gautreau, LCSW-BACS, ACSW, **Program** Manager Community Based Services.



Monroe Regional Office

Monroe OJJ participated in the 19th Annual Sickle Cell Anemia Run/Walk-a-Thon held recently at the Louisiana Purchase Gardens & Zoo in Monroe. Our team made a donation and walked in memory of **PPO3 Donald Hamler**, who suffered from the disease and passed away earlier this year. We had a good time, and were awarded a trophy for largest group represented. **PPO3 Patrick Cooper** and **PPO3 Willie Hunter** were awarded trophies for the fastest finish times in their age groups. Afterwards, we enjoyed breakfast at I-HOP. We had so much fun, we are already making plans to participate next year.



Back Row (left to right) – PPO3 Willie Hunter, PPO2 Jeremy Keyes, PPO3 Patrick Cooper, PPO3 Gary Hunter, RM Patty Newman, PPS Karl Wallace, PS Walteree Barnes. Front Row (left to right) – PPO2 Cheryl Pringle, PPO3 Hannah Dozier, PPS Gail Wilson, PPO3 Janice Wheelis, PPO3 Jackie Kindrix, AC3 Kashka Flintroy. Not shown: PPS Orlando Davis.





Left, PPO 3 Patrick Cooper, right, PPO3 Willie Hunter.

Congratulations

PPO1 Reginald Chaptman recently became engaged to **Ms. Summer Young** of Houston, TX. Congratulations Reggie!!!

PPO1 Jeremy Fox and PPO1 Gregory Colvin recently completed the 40 hour Defensive Tactics Basic Course. Course instructors were PPO3 Gary Hunter and PPO3 Patrick Cooper. Jeremy and Greg were presented certificates by RM Patty Newman. Congratulations!



From left, PPO3 Gary Hunter, PPO1 Greg Colvin, PPO1 Jeremy Fox and PPO3 Patrick Cooper.

On May 13 RM Patty Newman, RM Ruth Stephens of Tallulah OJJ, supervisors and staff attended a Town Hall Meeting conducted by Dr. Livers at the Monroe OJJ office. Dr. Livers discussed current legislation, along with other matters that could affect OJJ. It was good information, and Dr. Livers answered all of our questions.

PPS Gail Wilson recently attended CPTP-Strategies for Supervisory Success held at ULM. This completed PPS Wilson's mandatory CPTP classes.

Congratulations to our Graduates

Monroe OJJ proudly celebrates the graduation of the following members of our OJJ Extended Family:

Jessica Newman, daughter of RM Patty Newman, graduated from ULM on May 22 with a degree in Risk Management and Insurance. Congratulations Jessica!

Shauncey Hunter, daughter of PPO3 Gary Hunter graduated with honors from Neville High School on May 20. She will attend LSU in the Fall. Congratulations Shauncey!

We are also celebrating the recent kindergarten graduations of Jaioni Hunter, daughter of PPO3 Willie Hunter and Brenden McNair, son of PPO3 Joel McNail. They were so cute!

Lake Charles Regional Office

Welcome Aboard

Lake Charles OJJ welcomes **Transport Officer Corey Harmon**. We are so grateful to have **Corey** aboard!

Congratulations

PPO Angie Stevens announced that one of her clients, S.Y., won the title of "All-State Champ" for throwing the javelin 176 feet. We are very proud of him!



PPS Melissa Cross, along with her husband Ben and son Jackson, welcome the newest addition to their family, Jonathan Bryce Cross. Jonathan was born on May 17, weighing 7 pounds, 9 ounces and was 19 ½ inches long.

Congratulations to the Cross Family on their new, beautiful little boy!

Thanks

PPO Monet Newman, PPO Ronald Gilchrist and PPO Fred Fontenot, along with Calcasieu Parish Assistant District Attorneys Cynthia Clay Lands and **Stephanie Cochran,** took the opportunity to visit with their youth who reside at Swanson Center for Youth. They were given a tour and visited with facility staff. We are proud of them for showing they care about their youth.

PPO Ronald Gilchrist recently transported a youth in placed in secure care to a funeral. Way to go **Ronald** for demonstrating compassion!

PPO Jeff Haley transported two local youths, C.M. and C.B., to the Youth Challenge Program in Carville. Thank you **Jeff** for stepping in during "crunch time"!

A learning moment for the youth at Boy's Village was conducted through a softball game. PPO Fred Fontenot, PPO Garrick Chambers and PPO Ronald Gilchrist took this opportunity to play an unfair game with the youth and PPO Karli Pullard acted as the cheerleader. During this game, intentional bad calls were made to facilitate an appropriate way of dealing with the situation. Everyone had a great time and what better way to learn than having fun doing it!

PPO Hollie Comeaux transported one of her youth, J.F., who is pregnant, to the Office of Public Health, SWLA Health Education Center. J.F. was able to participate in the Safe Sleep and Suffocation Class and Child Passenger Incentive Program. As a result, she was able to obtain a car seat with instructions of installation and use. A new play pen was also given to the youth for her baby. Great job being resourceful **Hollie!**

PPO Hollie Comeaux was also very persistent in obtaining necessary medical appointments for Youth T.G. As a result of Hollie's interventions, the youth was able to attend the appointments and was placed in an inpatient facility to address her needs. Awesome job Hollie!

PPO Delisa Clark, along with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., sponsored a golf tournament for Domestic Violence Awareness. The proceeds from the tournament were to benefit the local Women's Shelter. Thanks **Delisa** for being so active in our community!

PPO Jeff Haley has been very resourceful and diligent in his efforts to locate community service locations for our youth who live in Cameron Parish. Thank you **Jeff** for taking a special interest in helping the youth in this rural community!

PPO Rebecca Harmon gave of herself and her time, to mentor a youth, L.L., who could not write well, and had severe truancy issues. Due to **Rebecca's** guidance, the youth now attends school on a regular basis, his writing level has increased, and he is on the Honor Roll! Kudos for an incredible job, **Rebecca**!

PPO Karli Pullard has been conducting evening transports to assist Youth L.J. and the youth's mother, so they can attend anger management counseling groups. **Karli** gets the family from home and brings them back home after the session is over. Thank you, **Karli** for setting a great example of OJJ's mission!

Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Office



Lafayette/Opelousas OJJ welcomes our new **Regional Manager, Susan Miller.** We threw a weekend party in the park to show her how Acadiana has fun!

Susan attended LSU and lived in Monroe for several years, working as a special projects coordinator for a mortgage company, where she handled charity events in the community. She also worked for the Monroe United Way organization. Susan's dream job was to become a probation officer, and she accepted a PPO position with Baton Rouge OJJ in

2001. She was promoted to supervisor within five years, and recently took the reins of the Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Office.

Farewell, Sharon, and Thanks for Staying Close

The Lafayette/Opelousas Region sends a special "Thank You" to outgoing Regional Manager Sharon Guillory for her years of service in that position. When a new supervisor's position was announced for the Opelousas Office last year, RM Guillory decided to step down from Regional Manager into the new position as a way to transition to her retirement. Sharon is also from Opelousas, and wants to devote more time and energy to serving the youth in that community.

The Lafayette Office threw a surprise party for Sharon, in celebration of her years of service and devotion to the Regional Manager position. Officers prepared dishes, a buffet was set up, and the office managed to keep the secret from Sharon until it was time for her to make her appearance. Sharon was very touched by the generosity of her officers, and is very proud to have worked with them.



RM Sharon Guillory, arriving at the surprise party in her honor.

Congratulations

Transport Officer Joe Demoruelle was chosen as the Lafayette/Opelousas Region's Employee of the Month for May. Mr. Joe, a retired State Trooper, is always happy to assist with transports, no matter what part of the state his travels may take him to. He is truly an asset to have at the office.

Welcome

The Lafayette Office welcomed new **PPO Blair Johnson.** Blair, the sister of St. Martin Parish Officer Chase Cappel, joined the St. Mary Parish Unit May 17. Blair is anxious to begin supervising her caseload, and is looking forward to working with the youth and their families.

Jetson Center for Youth

Congratulations



Program Manager
Belinda Thomas
has been selected to
receive the
Director's Award
of Excellence.
Director Daron
Brown said that
Ms. Thomas has
proven to be a

valuable team member who is responsible for ensuring that the facility meets ACA and PbS standards, as well as facility policies. She has extensive knowledge of the operations of the facility and serves as the director's designee when Director Brown is away. "Belinda has displayed great leadership skills and is able to make sound decisions while handling the day-to-day demands of the facility," Director Brown said. She is very professional when dealing with the public and central office staff and adapts well to change.

We join Director Brown in congratulating Belinda Thomas for a job well done.



LaMOD Coordinator Faoud Harb recently received his Masters degrees in Public Administration from Southern University. "I started this journey while working full time on a 12 hour shift at JCY," Faoud

said. "The facility leadership and supervisors supported me by making every possible effort to allow me to attend school, so I want to thank them. Throughout the years I had to take many different classes for 54 credits. I only had one B grade. All the rest were As. I am looking forward to using what I learned in the service of the agency and the youth, who we teach ways to change and become successful, and well as to support OJJ's Mission."

We are so proud of Faoud and look forward to many years of service.

Fast Track Youth Visit Nursing Home

The youth in Jetson's Fast Track Program recently visited Zachary Manor Nursing Home in Zachary. The facility provides extended-stay nursing care to seniors with varying levels of disabilities.

Youth and staff volunteered at Zachary Manor. First, the youth assisted the elderly in playing a game of Bingo. Then, the kids sang a couple of songs requested by the audience. Lastly, the youth gathered together and sang a variety of upbeat songs with the help of a karaoke machine. The residents and staff of Zachary Manor were overjoyed with the visit and are looking forward to the next trip.

The youth reminisced about their experience for the entire day. They joked about some humorous encounters with residents. Also, some youth shared their personal feelings and stories about family members and loved ones' experiences with assisted living. Overall, the field trip was a huge success and the Fast

Track youth look forward to going back and bringing cheer, entertainment, and service to the community!

Scenic Alternative High Schools Students LEAP!

Students attending Scenic Alternative High School at Jetson experienced an academic success. Statewide assessments were administered in March and April to students in all grades across each school district in Louisiana. Students at Scenic were very serious about the tests when they were administered. In fact, there was 100% participation. All the students took the tests due in large part to intervention counseling by Principal Ronnie Knox, along with several teachers, leading up to the dates of testing. There was definitely a team effort in talking to students one-on-one to guarantee that they would complete the different portions of the test. Results of the Leap, iLeap, and GEE will be received soon.

The dorm staff was extremely helpful during the two weeks of testing, assisting in getting the students to and from their assigned testing sites. There were no test irregularities. Hats off to everyone for a job well done

A celebration was held for the participating students and dorm staff. Youth could visit the LEAP Café for treats including chili dogs, nachos and cheese, chips and soft drinks. Some food was furnished by the education staff. The cafeteria furnished the wieners and chili. This was the staff's special way of saying "thank you" to the students for seeing a task to completion.

Big Donation Received for Small Engine Repair Training Program

Mark Nelson, training instructor for the Briggs & Stratton Company in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, donated equipment and teaching manuals for use by Instructors Larry Poor and Samuel Butler in the small engine repair course offered at Scenic Alternative High

School at Jetson. This donation will expand the learning that takes place in this program.

Equipment/teaching materials donated were:

- Vanguard Commercial Power 16 HP V-twin engine
- Intek Pro 206 (OHV) 6.5 HP Engine
- Craftsman Briggs & Stratton Platinum 21.0 HP XRD Go- Cart Engine
- Briggs & Stratton 6 HP classroom instructional model
- Briggs & Stratton Single Cylinder "L" head Repair Manual and
- Signage for wall displays

The students' enthusiasm to learn is at an all time high. This enables the instructors to further educate the students, equipping them with increased knowledge of the cutting edge demands in this industry.



A truckload of donated equipment from Briggs & Stratton Company.

Mr. Poor and Mr. Butler have established relationships with many professionals in their field. The students benefit and the state saves money. This is a huge donation from an industry leader in engine technology. The students were amazed at the generosity of Briggs & Stratton. Briggs & Stratton manufactures small engines and outdoor power equipment. The company has been building powerful, reliable engines for over 100 years, and builds 10 million small engines each year. It is the largest manufacturer of aircooled engines in the world.

We appreciate this very generous donation from Briggs & Stratton Co.

Till, Till, Tilling All Day Long - Small Engine Repair Course to Bear Fruit (or something)

This is the season for new growth. Seeds and weeds are plentiful this time of the year. Most people talk about planting something but only a handful actually get around to it. But students at Scenic Alternative High School are in the groove. Students are tilling ground for planting in the very near future.

The decision of what to plant is left up to Instructors Larry Poor and Samuel Butler. Students learn not only how to use gardening equipment but also how to maintain and repair the equipment. Once students master the skills needed to become qualified and recognized, Mr. Poor arranges for them to take the National Board exam which yields certificates in Two Stroke and Four Stroke engine repairs. The following students have accomplished this recognition: H. Baise, K. Borden, J. Neal and C. West.

Jetson youth enjoy the hand-on aspect of this program. One student said they feel like they are on a real job. You can't beat that for success and a feeling of self-worth. Stay tuned for more information as the planting is completed and the harvest begins. Who knows? Maybe there will be award-winning tomatoes!

Our Bulletin Boards Spring with Color

Carolyn Rash, SSD #1 reading teacher, was responsible for the school's bulletin board decorations for April. Nine boards were decorated with beautiful and colorful borders. Each board has a theme that emphasizes student assignments by displaying academic work completed. Carolvn's imagination and creativity allowed boards to be created that explode with excitement and pique the interest of everyone who enters the school buildings. Principal Ronnie Knox says "congratulations, Ms. Rash, for doing a GREAT job!"

"Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire" Staff Development Continues

The faculty book study continues at Scenic Alternative High School. The April staff development activity focused on several chapters of the book.

Arlene Sampson, SSD # 1 teacher, presented material from Chapter 4-Writing. introduced the topic to the teachers in an interesting way. Each desk had a bag of "Hot Fries" chips and 'Hot Balls" candy. students in the publication were ESL (English as a second language) which makes it more challenging for the teacher. The techniques, however, are the same for anyone learning to write well. The author emphasized that in order to become a good writer, one must write, re-write and write again. Each time, learning a new skill of composition was the The Young Author Project end result. culminated with the entire class writing a book. Ms. Sampson gave the teachers some great learning materials to assist with writing in the classroom. This is very important to the development of composition as writing is on every standardized student assessment.



SSD #1 math and science teacher Arlene Sampson.

Testing Obsessions-Chapter 6 was presented by Patricia Moore, SSD #1 English/Language Arts teacher. The author suggested that students need to learn how to study for any test and to be serious about taking the test. Publishers of tests carefully design multiple-choice questions to include the "wrong" answer that most students get

when they don't know the correct answer. This is tricky for the students because when they see the "wrong" answer, and they have just arrived at the same answer, they assume that it is the correct answer and they stop trying to determine the correct answer. In other words, they jump to conclusions, mark the wrong answer and go to the next question.



Patricia Moore, SSD#1 E/LA Teacher

Chapter 7 focused on the teaching of history and related subjects. This chapter was presented by **Carrie Stewart**, who happens to be a **math teacher**. It's no wonder she began her presentation with a vocal rendition of Sam Cooke's song, "don't know much about history; don't know much about geography..."



Carrie Stewart, math teacher

The author explained that emphasis is placed on reading and math scores, and history is barely taught in elementary schools. Teachers were encouraged to use creative ideas to teach historical facts. Most holidays, like Memorial Day, Independence Day and Veterans Day, represent historical events and can be explained during a lesson. Movies can depict historical events very well and the students relate to that medium, thus engaging in learning. Some suggestions were the movies *Norma Rae* or *On the Waterfront* for Labor Day and *Saving Private Ryan* for Veterans Day.

Chapter 8-Rocket Man was presented by Willie Etta Geralds, social studies teacher. This chapter explores the nature of science and scientific discovery. Usually in science, teachers need to let students make mistakes so they can become aware of scientific concepts. Most discoveries are made following mistakes. This is what makes up experiments.

Manipulatives are tools that let students think, perform, problem-solve, and make things happen while they are working toward a solution. In science, it is very important to use hands-on learning with manipulatives to aid students in understanding abstract concepts and improve achievement. This provides an important step in the evolution of the students' developmental skills and learning values. With the right manipulatives, skills such as memory retention, reading, motor skills, hand-eye coordination and learning awareness are enhanced and improved.

Chapter 9-Art Lover, Incorporating Art in the Classroom, was presented by DeWayne Nedie, science teacher. Many skills are learned in art education. Teachers can enhance student learning by creating opportunities to make connections between art content areas and other disciplines across the curriculum. Skills learned in art education discipline, responsibility, teamwork, correcting sacrifice, practice, mistakes. listening and time management. students relate to material, both visually and tactically. The author encourages teachers to allow students to be the performers, even if they are not perfect.



DeWayne Nedie, science teacher

Jetson Youth Attend the Ringling Brothers/Barnum and Bailey Circus

A group of youth and staff recently attended the circus at the Baton Rouge River Center. For many of the kids, it was their first time to see a circus performance.

The event was organized by Life Skills **Instructor Denise Clause,** who said, "the kids had such a wonderful time, and I got such joy watching THEM instead of the performers. Seven of the eight had never seen a circus and had no idea what to expect. They were still talking about it the next day and showing me their ticket stubs. As the teacher of Life Skills, I feel it is vital to the success of this class to give the youth the opportunity to practice what they have learned out in the community. We have been working hard on table manners and appropriate social skills. The youth did not even realize the importance of applauding for the performers to show appreciation for their work and dedication."

Staff who attend the Ringling Brothers and Barnum Circus were Director Daron Brown, Ms. Denise Clause, Ms. Kelly Johnson, Mr. Jumar Ficklin, Mr. James Spears, Mr. Micon Gaines and Ms. Janice Huggins. Youth who attended were Reginald F., Shawn T., Romeo R., Brandon M., Kennels J., Carl A., Daniel P. and Renee D.



Jetson youth and staff attended the circus performance at the Baton Rouge River Center.

Following is an essay written by one of the youth who attended the circus performance.

How Good Things Happen

By Reginald F.

Being off campus is really fun because I see that a lot of good things can happen to you when you do the right thing. Going to the circus with other youth was really fun because we got to see things that we thought were fake on T.V. but are "real life."

We enjoyed the popcorn, cotton candy and all the different animal acts, such as horses, tigers, elephants and even dogs and cats!! We really laughed at the dancing clown. After the circus **Ms. Clause** took our picture in front of the Old State Capitol.

We learned that you can have fun and laugh a lot without using drugs or alcohol. Our behavior was outstanding because **Director Brown** and Ms. Clause set expectations before we even left campus.

I wish we could take another trip with different youth and enjoy more time being off campus.

I would like to thank Ms. Clause and Director Brown for setting this up and the staff that took their time off to be with us.

Hammond Regional Office

SUPERSTAR

The **Hammond OJJ Superstar** for May was **PPO1Denise Wall.** She was recognized by **PPO1 Mike Marques** for taking the time to help him pick up and drop off a female youth.

Welcome

PPO1 Daniel Johnson transferred from the New Orleans Regional Office to the Hammond Regional Office on May 10. We're very happy to have him as part of our team!

Congratulations

Tiffany James was reallocated from a PPO2 to a PPO3.

Jennifer Sirchia was reallocated from a PPO1 to a PPO2.

Central Office

Welcome

We welcomed our new IT Director, Vanessa Tom, who will oversee information systems and technology statewide. We welcome Vanessa to the OJJ team.



Vanessa has over 18 years of experience, including 10 years in state government/higher education. She comes to OJJ from the Department of Education where she served as IT Management Consultant Supervisor. Vanessa is a native of the Baltimore, Maryland area, and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics from Penn State and a Masters of Science in Information Systems and Decision Sciences from LSU. She and her husband, a mathematics professor at LSU, have lived in Louisiana for almost 20 years, and have two sons.

Farewell

We said goodbye to two members of the staff who left for other state agencies. **Chief Fiscal Officer Martina Stribling** began a new position at DSS, and **Marlene Scott** in Fiscal transferred to DOTD.

While OJJ is not involved in the Gulf oil disaster like so many other state agencies, the crisis is still on our hearts and minds. Suzie Durrett, Deputy Compact Administrator for Interstate Compact on Juveniles, shares the Associated Press news photo below, of her niece, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Biologist Kayla DiBenedetto. Kayla attempted to catch a brown pelican, covered with oil, on Grand Isle. She and her partner chased the bird in an effort to rescue it for over two hours before giving up due to nightfall. They expected to try again the following day.



Condolences

Administrative Coordinator 3 Gail Miller's mother passed away recently. Gail was with central office for many years and recently joined the Baton Rouge OJJ team. Please remember Gail and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

Bridge City Center for Youth

Memorial Day Celebrated at BCCY

By Group Leader Emily Williams

Twelve youth from Harmony Dormitory Community were given the opportunity to participate and celebrate Memorial Day with Southeast Louisiana War Veterans Home residents. This memorial observance represented a simple and unifying way to commemorate our history and honor the struggle to protect our freedoms.

What a beautiful program! Youth **Denzel D.** wrote a poem honoring the veterans and youth **Alan L.** presented the residents with a Commemoration Certificate for their untiring dedication to the United States Armed Forces.

Participating in this program helped reeducate and remind the youth of the true meaning of Memorial Day. Many public officials and local agencies also participated in the program. Mr. Harold M. Keller, President of "Get High on Life" was the Master of Ceremonies and staff from the St. John Parish Sheriff's Office performed the presentation of colors and retirement of the colors. Keynote speaker was Mr. V.J. St. Pierre, St. Charles Parish President.

We saw the Flag Folding Ceremony, and what an experience that was. The flag of the United States of America is folded 13 times, and each fold has a meaning. After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served, preserving for us the rights, privileges and freedoms we enjoy today.

We also saw the Flaming Helmet memorial service, placing of the memorial wreath and the presentation and release of balloons.

The youth were also given the opportunity to meet the newly-elected President of St. John the Baptist Parish, **Ms. Natalie Robottom.**

Immediately after the program the youth did a wonderful job serving refreshment to all the residents, their families and invited guests.

The youth were escorted by staff members Leroy Hinton, Kedreika Roberson, Shalita Sanders and Group Leaders Emily Williams and Louis Evans.



Youth Denzel D., left, and Alan L., right, at the Memorial Day Celebration at the Southeast Louisiana War Veterans Home.

BCCY Memorial Day Activities

BCCY youth commemorated Memorial Day with a number of activities, including a Flag Ceremony on campus; a visit to the D-Day Museum by youth from Harmony, Faith and Liberty Dormitories; a visit to a VFW Hall in the community to work with volunteers; watching the movie *Saving Private Ryan* during a group session; acknowledgement of veterans on our staff and a visit to Jean Lafitte National Cemetery by Serenity and Justice Dormitories.

Spotlight on Family Involvement: Perseverance Dormitory Holds a Meet and Greet for Parents

In May Perseverance Fast Track Housing Unit held its first annual Meet and Greet at BCCY. The event provided parents and guardians with a better understanding of the Fast Track Program and allowed them to engage in what their children are learning and become more involved with their child.

The parents participated in activities including a Check-in that led to a Circle-up. This turned out to be a great example of what our youth are learning. **Group Leader Terri DeLille** called the Circle-up to address an issue between a parent and her son. Although the youth was not expecting the Circle-up, he was relieved and his mother showed concern. She was thankful for being allowed to address the issue and stressed how important it is to her to become involved with her son, helping him while he's in the Fast Track Program.

Group Leader DeLille facilitated a teambuilding exercise with the assistance of Captain Lance Daniels, Group Leader, Tamara Cotton, Social Services Counselor, Joseph Allen, YouthCare Officer, Julia Jack, Social Services Counselor, Olakunle Awogboro, YouthCare Officer and Latrice Sampson, LSU Treatment.

The objective was to reshape a circle. The expectation was that everyone would participate and form two circles. The purpose included teambuilding, communication and trust. Parents were placed in different group from the one their child was in. Expectations were set and the instructions were given. A parent served as time keeper. Both groups had ten minutes or less to complete the task of reshaping their circle without releasing hands.

Group 1 completed the circle while Group 2 continued to struggle in forming the circle after the ten minutes.

GL DeLille processed with the parents about the experience and generated positive feedback. Group 1 shared that communication and teamwork helped them to be successful. Group 2 struggled with the activity but with laughter. Parents said it was confusing because they ended up on the outside not connected with the group.

Capt. Lance Daniels, Group Leader, asked Group 2 about their feelings about not being able to form the circle. Parents said there was no communication, everyone was talking and became frustrated because they could not get it together. A father said that he just wanted to give up, but if he did he was going to let his team down.

Capt. Daniels said the purpose was to keep trying until you succeed with the help of your team. GL DeLille told the parents the La MOD Fast Track Program is designed to teach our kids that it is alright to struggle, which is part of the learning process. With determination, commitment, support and guidance, the team succeeds.

Perserverance Team would like to extend special thanks to Mrs. Guilford, Education, Riverside Alternative High School; Capt. Lance Daniels, Group Leader and Mrs. Sampson, LSU Treatment Services.

Special Thanks from Group Leader Terri DeLille to the wonderful staff in Perseverance Dormitory: SSC 2 Tamara Cotton, YCO Joseph Allen, SSC Julia Jack, YCW Horace Williams, YCO Olakunle Awogboro and YCO Kawanner Armstrong.

To Director Linda London: thank you for your support in allowing Perseverance Dormitory to embrace families with engagement, your faith for believing in us and your leadership, as you continue to encourage us to move forward to the next level with the Fast Track Program. We are very grateful.

Baby Shower Held for Darvonya Smith

La MOD Coordinator Darvonya Smith was given a surprise baby shower by the administrative staff. We waited until the last minute and at some point thought that the shower would have to be held without the honoree. We policed the parking lot for her arrival, wondering is this little boy was being born on I-10 West (ha ha)! But Darvonya prevailed and was faithfully at work.



The guest of honor was truly surprised.



Shower attendees included, from left, Carolyn Dillon, Julie LaRose and Mitzi Sonnier.



Other guests were, from left, Jelata Jordan, Shauna Charles, Eddie Newsome and Janet Benn.

Retirement Party held for Deputy Director Michael Gaines

BCCY Deputy Director, Michael Gaines has retired. Although it was a bittersweet occasion, Bridge City Center for Youth thought it only fair to send him out with a bang. He was honored with a surprise Retirement Roast held at LaMaison Creole, in Harvey, and was attended by co-workers, family members and friends.

During the party we cried and laughed, laughed and cried, and sometimes just cried.

Mr. Gaines was presented with several funny awards, a certificate from Mayor Melvin "Kip" Holden, of Baton Rouge, as well as other plaques and gifts.

Director Linda London presented Mr. Gaines with a Spud McKenzie Award, referring to an incident in which a youth struck Mr. Gaines. She said he was a trooper, and even with his black eye, he never missed a beat.

Assistant Director Rickey Wright presented him with an award for "BCCY's Little Big Man," in which he reflected on how much influence Mr. Gaines has had on him and that he always looked "UP" to him as his big, little brother. Kim Hampton presented Mr. Gaines with an award for being the "Big Little Man on Campus." On this certificate, there were platform K Swiss sneakers, and Kim said that Mr. Gaines would rise to the occasion at any cost.

Cassandra Washington, on the other hand, said she could not roast him. Her approach was tearful yet straight forward. She described Mr. Gaines as a person, a friend, a family member and a supervisor. Of course tears fell throughout the room.

Although he will be greatly missed, we wish Mr. Gaines a wealth of success in his new endeavors.



The honoree, Michael Gaines.



From left, Cassandra Washington, Michael Gaines, Julie LaRose, Director Linda London and Asst. Director Rickey Wright in the rear.



The guests enjoying the roast for Michael Gaines.

Baton Rouge Regional Office

Congratulations

Congratulations to **PPO Myron Theriot**, **Employee of the Month** for May.

Condolences

Administrative Coordinator 3 Gail Miller's mother passed away recently. Gail was with central office for many years and recently joined the Baton Rouge OJJ team. Please remember Gail and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

Farewell

Baton Rouge OJJ would like to wish **PPS Susan Miller** and **PPO Katina Broden** a happy farewell and best of luck in their future endeavors. We are sad to see both of them leave as their leadership and professionalism will be greatly missed. Take care and remember you both will always be a part of the Baton Rouge OJJ family.

Thanks

Baton Rouge OJJ kicked off the month of May with a crawfish boil to unite the staff and show our employees that their hard work and dedication are appreciated and greatly supported. Thanks go out to all Baton Rouge OJJ staff members who took the time to organize and decorate for this wonderful event. A special thanks to our cooks, **PPS Susan Miller** and **PPO Larry Aaron.**

Hats Off

We would like to acknowledge **PPO Marina** Jenkins for the special support she provided to one of our youth who was placed in custody at the end of the school year. PPO Jenkins brought homework back and forth from the youth to the school so he could continue to earn credit for the rest of the school year. PPO Jenkins also arranged to

have the youth brought to school for his final exams so he could be promoted to the next grade. Hats off PPO Jenkins, job well done!

We would also like to acknowledge **SSC Jennifer Anderson** for the continued support she provides to all of our youth and families. If something needs to be done, she will find a way to do it and she is always willing to help in any way she can.

Congratulations on Graduations

Congratulations to **PPO** Katina Broden whose daughter Kalani graduated from Westdale Middle Magnet School, receiving the Great Scholars Award.

Congratulations to **PPO Darla Hood** whose **son Devin** graduated from kindergarten at Louis Spencer Elementary School.

Congratulations to **PPO Roy McBride** whose **son Christian** graduated from Westdale Heights Academic Magnet Elementary, maintaining the A-B Honor Roll and the Principal's Honor Roll.

Congratulations to **PPO Naomi Rodney** whose **son Nickyle** graduated from Brusly Middle School and received awards for math, science, French, PE and reading.

Congratulations to **PPS Michelle Thomas** whose **daughter Ja'Salyn** graduated from LSU and received the following awards: Leadership LSU, Manship Ambassadors, Black Scholars Award and Who's Who among America's Colleges and Universities. WOW!

Con-graduations everyone!

Alexandria Regional Office

Condolences

It is with great sorrow that we announce the death of **PPO3 Pamela Oakes' brother, Melvin Rabalais.** Melvin passed away at his residence in May. He was 54 years old. Please keep Pam and her family in your prayers.

Welcome

We welcome **PPO 1 Franklin Parrino**, who joined the OJJ team in May..

Congratulations

Adm. Coordinator 4 Sharon Graham's son, Nicholas Graham, graduated from Pineville High School in May. Sharon is so very proud of him. Nicholas plans to attend LSUA in the fall.

Adm. Coordinator 3 Cassaundra Conston's son, Cedric Conston, graduated in May from Southern University with a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. Cassaundra is a proud parent of his success.

Teen Court Visits the State Capitol

PPO3 Donna Desoto once again took the Teen Court of Avoyelles Parish on a trip to Baton Rouge to tour the State Capitol. This continues to be an enjoyable tradition for the Teen Court. Two probationers were invited to attend, and both enjoyed the experience.

The students travelled in style and comfort on a 33 passenger tour bus, provided by sponsorship of the local bar association.

The first stop in Baton Rouge was the State Museum. This was truly delightful and enlightening for everyone. We were able to step back in time to the great music of the Old south Jamboree and learned about all of the wonderful festivals for which Louisiana is

known. We then walked to the Capitol to visit with the Legislature. The students learned the history of the State Capitol and of course, learned about the pencil that is still stuck in the ceiling on the Senate side.

No matter how many times you visit the Capitol, the beauty of the lava rock and marble are breathtaking. Everyone enjoyed lunch, provided by State Representative Robert Johnson, and finished it off with a delicious ice cream sandwich. Of course, you cannot go to the State Capitol and not go all the way to the top to the observatory.

It really does you good when a young person walks out onto the observatory and says "Oh my gosh, this is beautiful." Traveling with the group were PPO Lori Johnson, ADA Renee Roy, Attorney Katie Evans and John Gagnard.

From News Reports: The orangutan was in a rescue home and not doing well. This old emaciated hound wandered in, and the orangutan 'snapped to' like his buddy had arrived. He stayed with the hound night and day until he was well and found a reason to live. They are now inseparable, living at the TIGERS Sanctuary in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. A dog's not just a man's best friend but an orangutan's. Best friends **Suryia the orangutan** and **Roscoe the Blue Tick hound.**





Recipe of the Month BCCY Culinary Arts Chef Ronald J. Sonnier, CEC

The students of Culinary Arts and Occupations at Bridge City are frequently visited by folks touring the campus and are always ready to share some of the wonderful treats they prepare. Recently during their training they experimented on making some delicious pastries, and among their favorite were the cream puffs. The students produced pastries that some say were the best they have ever tasted. They made them small enough that even those who were on diets could enjoy them. Of course the chocolate chip cookies are always a favorite of most of the visitors, so this month we would like to share two recipes with you and hope that you will enjoy them.

Cream Puffs Makes 20 medium puffs

1 cup of water
½ cup butter
¼ tsp. salt
1 tbl. sugar
1 cup all-purpose flour
4 medium or large eggs (not jumbo)
Stirred Custard (recipe follows)
Powdered sugar or favorite chocolate icing

- 1. Combine water, margarine, salt and sugar in saucepan. Bring to a boil. Turn to low. Add flour all at once.
- 2. Using a whisk, beat fast and keep beating over low heat until mixture leaves the sides of pan and forms a stiff ball, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and let mixture cool for 5-10 minutes to 140 degrees or cooler.
- 3. Add eggs, one at a time, beating the mixture smooth after each one.
- 4. Drop batter by tablespoonfuls on lightly greased baking sheet. Bake at 425 degrees for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 degrees and bake for 10 minutes more.

5. Remove from oven. Cool and cut top off each puff. Fill with Stirred Custard and replace top. Sprinkle with powdered sugar or favorite chocolate icing.

Stirred Custard

1/3 cup all-purpose flour or 1/4 cup cornstarch 3/4 cup sugar 1/4 tsp. salt 2 1/2 cups milk 2 egg yolks 2 tbls. margarine 1 tsp. vanilla

- 1. Stir together flour or cornstarch, sugar and salt. Gradually stir in milk. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until thick.
- 2. Beat egg yolks, tempering with a little of the hot milk mixture. Then stir the egg yolks into the milk mixture. Cook 2 minutes more, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Add margarine and vanilla.

Chocolate Chip Cookies Yield 80 one ounce cookies

1 ½ cups granulated sugar
1½ cups light brown sugar
1½ tsp salt
6 oz. whole eggs *
2 tsp vanilla extract
2 oz. water
1½ tsp baking soda
4 cups flour (sifted with the baking soda)
3 cups chocolate chips

1 ½ cups shortening

- 1. Cream shortening and both sugars in mixer until light and fluffy. Add vanilla, water and egg. After mixing add sifted flour and baking soda. When mixed well add chocolate chips. Bake in preheated 375° oven for 13 minutes or until golden brown. Place on cookie rack to let cook.
- * Note Water, eggs, and milk can be measured by volume or weight so you don't need a scale to measure these products.

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ is published monthly to communicate with and about OJJ staff in offices and facilities throughout the state, about agency activities, happenings and items of interest.

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ is produced by the Central Office with input from staff statewide.

...until next month

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